US Army Corps of Engineers®
New Orleans District

Not a Victim: The New Orleans District Cultural Resources Program and Katrina

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- **The New Orleans District cultural resources staff was severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina.**
- **Out of a staff of 12 a total of 7 lost their residences. Only 1 of the 7 is living in their original residence.**

Three of the five archeologists had their residences destroyed along with two cooperative education students

- **Archeologists were displaced from San Antonio to St. Louis for a period of up to 4 months.**
- **Nevertheless, the staff responded well to the challenge of emergency projects and support for FEMA.**

MVN archeologists completed cultural resources compliance for numerous projects ranging from

Levee Repairs

Borrow Pits

Repairs to Historic Drainage Stations

Photo 1 – Roof ridge flashing missing; west end of bldg.

Photo 2 – Pump G

Reported Coffin is Really a Shrimp Cooler

FEMA Support

In addition, the MVN Natural and Cultural Resources Analysis Section received a significant amount of funds from FEMA for support of historic preservation and archeological projects.

MVN contractors survey damaged buildings in New Orleans

Assessed Conditions of Historic Districts

Monitored construction at FEMA temporary housing sites

Phase I Archeological Surveys

Conditions Which Allowed for Success

- IDIQ contracts in place for cultural resources services
- Local contractors responded immediately by fielding crews
- Task orders awarded in one day
- SHPO support by quick 106 review
- Local knowledge of the project areas by New Orleans District personnel
- Knowledge of key state and local players in cultural resources management in Louisiana

Problems during Katrina Response

- Archeologists were not assigned to hurricane response teams
- Communications was a problem
- CORs were not available

Solutions

- Cultural Resources contracts written to allow work outside of District boundaries
- Assign cultural resources staff to emergency response crews
- Develop standard operating procedures for handling cultural resources issues

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